

Message Text

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PAGE 01 SEOUL 03415 250749Z
ACTION EA-12

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 NSAE-00
NSCE-00 SSO-00 ICAE-00 INRE-00 PM-05 H-02 INR-10
L-03 PA-02 SP-02 SS-15 CAB-05 COME-00 DOTE-00
EB-08 FAA-00 /077 W
-----046750 250755Z /13

O R 250706Z APR 78
FM AMEMBASSY SEOUL
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 678
INFO AMEMBASSY HELSINKI
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY OTTAWA
AMEMBASSY TOKYO

UNCLAS SEOUL 3415

E.O. 11652: NA
TAGS: PEPR, KS, RU, CA, JA, FI
SUBJECT: PRESIDENT PAK THANKS SOVIETS, OTHER NATIONS, FOR
KAL ASSISTANCE

REF: STATE 104465

1. PRESIDENT PAK CHONG-HUI APRIL 24 ISSUED FOLLOWING STATEMENT
REGARDING RECENT KAL FLIGHT INCIDENT:

BEGIN TEXT:

DUE TO UNINTENTIONAL TROUBLE, THE KAL PLANE WHICH WAS ON A
REGULAR FLIGHT BETWEEN SEOUL AND PARIS HAD TO MAKE AN EMERGENCY
LANDING NEAR MURMANSK IN SOVIET TERRITORY LAST FRIDAY WHILE
FLYING FROM PARIS TO SEOUL, VIA THE NORTH POLE AIR ROUTE,
UNFORTUNATELY BRINGING ABOUT THE DEATH OF THE TWO PASSENGERS
AND INJURIES TO SOME 10 PASSENGERS. ON SUCH AN UNFORTUNATE
INCIDENT, I FEEL SAD TOGETHER WITH THE PEOPLE.
HOWEVER, IT IS REALLY A STROKE OF GOOD LUCK IN THE MIDST
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OF MISFORTUNE THAT THE COOL AND MASTERLY SKILLS OF THE CREWMEN,
INCLUDING CAPTAIN KIM CHANG-KYU, AND THE ORDERLY COOPERA-
TION OF THE PASSENGERS MINIMIZED THE VICTIMS EVEN THOUGH
THE PLANE MADE AN EMERGENCY LANDING AT NIGHT ON A STRANGE
FROZEN LAKE.

PARTICULARLY, I EXTEND HEARTFELT GRATITUDE TO THE

GOVERNMENTS OF THE UNITED STATES, CANADA, JAPAN AND FINLAND
AND THE CONVENTION OF INTERNATIONAL CIVIL AVIATION, THE
INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE OF THE RED CROSS, AND THE LEAGUE
OF RED CROSS SOCIETIES FOR THEIR SPEEDY AND POSITIVE
COOPERATION IN DEALING WITH THE INCIDENT FOR THE RELIEF
OF THE PASSENGERS AND CREW, SHORTLY AFTER THE INCIDENT.

AT THE SAME TIME, I EXPRESS PROFOUND GRATITUDE TO
THE FAVORABLE CONSIDERATION AND STEPS OF THE SOVIET
AUTHORITIES WHICH RETURNED THE PASSENGERS AND THE CREW
WITHOUT DELAY.

SO FAR, THE DETAILS OF THE CAUSE OF THE INCIDENT
ARE YET TO BE DETERMINED. ACCORDING TO REPORTS REACHING
HERE SO FAR, HOWEVER, THE INCIDENT WAS BROUGHT ABOUT BY
MECHANICAL TROUBLE, NOT BY AN ERROR OF THE CREW. IN VIEW
OF THIS, I REPEATEDLY ASK THE SOVIET AUTHORITIES TO
SPEEDILY RETURN FROM THE HUMANITARIAN STANDPOINT THE
TWO CREWMEN WHO ARE STILL DETAINED IN THE SOVIET UNION.

I EXPRESS DEEP CONDOLENCES OVER THE LOSS OF THE
PRECIOUS LIVES OF THE TWO PASSENGERS. I ALSO HOPE THAT
THE INJURED PASSENGERS WILL RECOVER THEIR HEALTH SOON.

I ALSO EXPRESS THANKS TO THE PEOPLE WHO HAVE
WISHED FOR THE SAFE RETURN OF THE PASSENGERS AND THE
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CREW. END TEXT.

2. PRESIDENT PAK, IT WAS ANNOUNCED, ALSO DIRECTED
FORMATION OF A GOVERNMENT COMMITTEE CHAIRED BY THE
VICE MINISTER OF TRANSPORTATION TO INVESTIGATE THE
INCIDENT.
SNEIDER

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Message Attributes

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Disposition Remarks:
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